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Jerry L. Walls

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PH 615
SEMINAR IN PHILOSOPHY: C.S. LEWIS

Spring 2007
Jerry L. Walls

Purpose

Students who complete this course will:

1. become acquainted with some of C.S. Lewis' main apologetic and theological writings;
2. discern the central theological and moral themes that run through these writings;
3. assess his arguments for their philosophical soundness; and
4. evaluate the contemporary apologetic value of his works.

Requirements

1. Since this is primarily a seminary course, it is assumed that everyone will read the assignments carefully before class and come prepared to make significant contributions to the discussion.
2. Attendance is required. Two absences will be permitted. A reading and attendance report will be due the last day of class. If all reading is not done, it will affect your grade adversely.
3. A twenty page paper on a topic of your choice will be due by 4 o'clock the Monday of exam week.

Texts

1. The Abolition of Man
2. Mere Christianity
3. Miracles
4. The Four Loves
5. The Great Divorce
6. A Grief Observed
7. C.S. Lewis and Francis Schaeffer

Daily Assignments

February 6	Introduction	
8	CS Lewis and Francis Schaeffer The Abolition of Man	10–34 Chapter 1–2
13	The Abolition of Man	Chapter 3
15	Mere Christianity	Book I
20	Mere Christianity	Book II
22	Mere Christianity	Book III, Chapters. 1-6
27	Mere Christianity	Book III, Chapters 7-12
March 1	Mere Christianity	Book IV, Chapters 1-6
6	Mere Christianity	Book IV, Chapters 7-11
8	Miracles	Chapters 1-3
13	Miracles	Chapters 4-6
15	Miracles	Chapters 7-10
20	Miracles	Chapters 11-12
22	Miracles	Chapters 13-15
27	Miracles	Chapters 16-17, Appendix B
29	The Four Loves	Introduction , Chapter 1
April 2-6	READING WEEK	
10	The Four Loves	Chapters 2-3
12	The Four Loves	Chapters 4-5
17	The Great Divorce	Chapters 1-5
19	The Great Divorce	Chapters 6-9
24	The Great Divorce	Chapters 10-14
26	A Grief Observed	Foreword, Introduction, Chapters 1-2
May 1	A Grief Observed	Chapter 3
3	CS Lewis and Francis Schaeffer	51-69; 74-80; 83-88; 98-110; 121-138; 141-143
8	CS Lewis and Francis Schaeffer	156-169; 171-183; 199-214; 217-272
10	Conclusion	

LEWIS AND LATIN

I have reviewed the editions of the seven CS Lewis works used for our class, and culled from them all of the Latin words or expressions, for which I have provided rough translations, as listed below. Since I do not actually know Latin, and “translated” simply cribbed from various dictionaries, the listing is worth exactly what you paid for it. But just so you wouldn’t feel cheated, I threw in Lewis’ Italian stuff, too. Translational doubt is indicated with (?), and total defeat with (???).

The Abolition of Man

- p.19 pons asinorum – “The Asses Bridge” This is the title of the Latin translation of the 5th Proposition in Euclid’s Geometry, hence, “something difficult for beginners.”
- p.24 secundum litteram – “According to literature”
- p.26 obiter dicta – “Things said by the way”
- p.28 ordo amoris – “Order of love”
- p.33 dulce et decorum est pro patria mori – “It is sweet and right to die for one’s country”
- p.44 experimentum crucis – “Experience of torture” (?)
- p.52 cuor gentil (Italian) – “gentle heart”
- p.52 Humani nihil a me aleienum puto – “Nothing human is to me a stranger”
- p.74 sic volo, sic jubeo – “Thus I will, thus I order”
- p.77 ferum vitorem cepit – “Wild _____ (???)
- p.86 sui generis – Literally, “of its own kind”, thus used to mean “in its own class”

Mere Christianity

- p.8 odium theologicum – “Theological hatred”
- p.68 post mortem – “After death”
- p.110 orenda – I thought this was Italian, but it turned out to be an Iroquois term for the spiritual energy or power they believed to be inherent in animate and inanimate natural objects.
- p.126 Ecce Homo – Title of work quoted at the head of the chapter, “Behold the Man,” taken, of course from Pontius Pilate’s presentation of Jesus to the crowd at His (Roman) trial.
- p.162 status quo – “The state in which”
- p.184 vis medicatrix naturae – “Natural healing power”

The Great Divorce

- p.66 Refrigerium – A late Latin term meaning “refreshment,” thus, “Paradise,” or alternatively, a cooling respite for one in Hell.
- p.123 idolum – Late Latin derived from “idol,” usually “a shadowy presence, an insubstantial image.”

The Four Loves

- p.58 Amicitia – “Friendship”
- p.62 a priori – Literally, “from above,” ie., based on theory rather than experience.

- p.95 par excellence – “Best of all; incomparable.”
p.102 gravis ardor – “Burning weight; serious passion.”

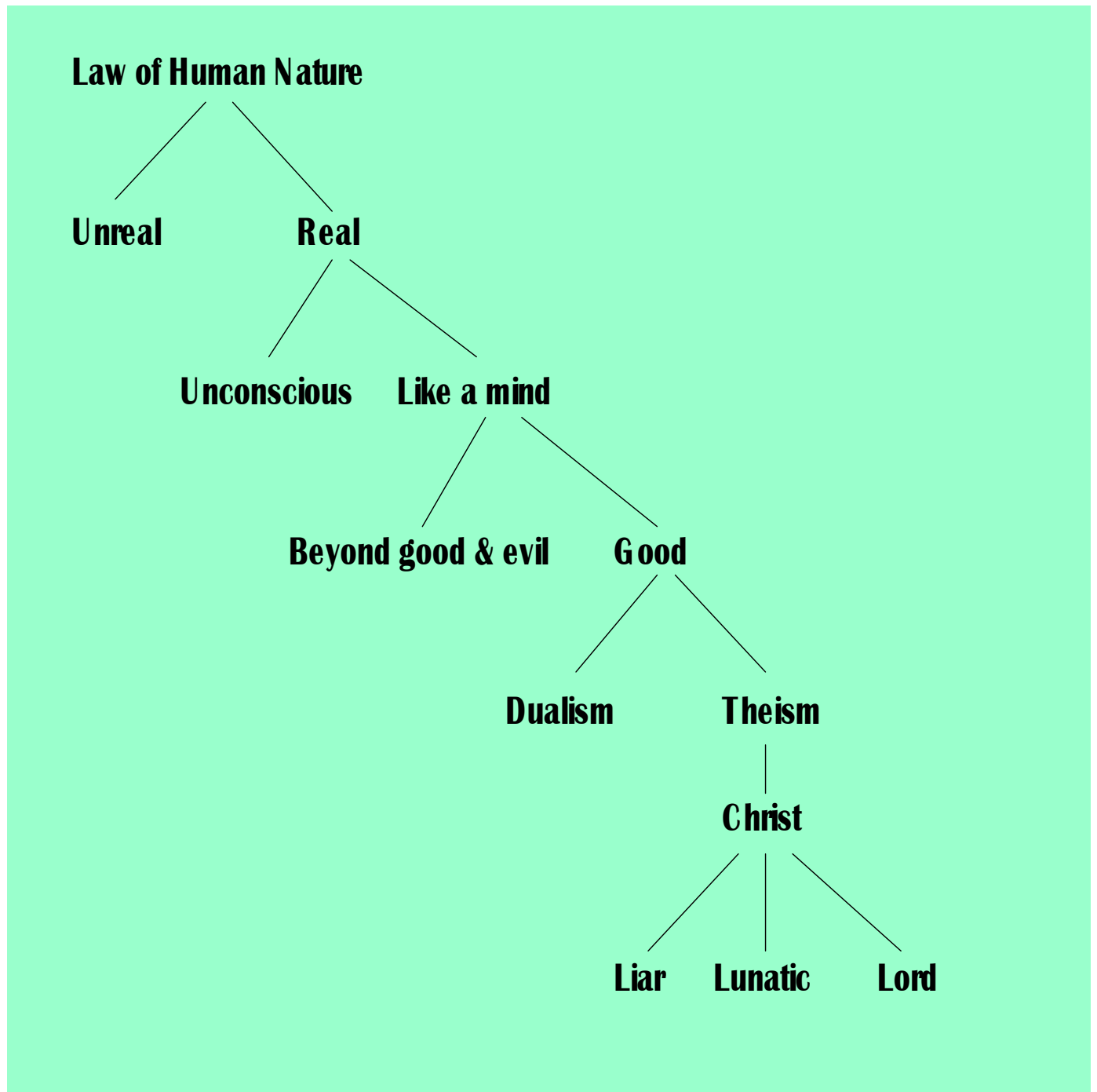
A Grief Observed

- p.88 Par excellence – “Best of all; incomparable.”
p.89 Poi si torno all’ eternal Fontana.” (Italian), “Then so turned to the eternal fountain.” This beautiful line, describing the death of Joy Lewis, must be from Dante’s Paradiso, but I haven’t localized the reference.

CENTRAL THREAD OF ARGUMENT IN THE ABOLITION OF MAN

1. Virtue, such as being willing to die for a good cause is a good thing (implied).
2. If we are to have virtue, we must have trained emotions, stable sentiments (pp. 24-5).
3. If we are to have trained emotions, we must have objective value (p. 18).
4. Those who treat judgments of value as mere sentiments must either debunk the sentiment that it is noble to die for a good cause or work to produce this sentiment in some because it is useful to us, ie. on grounds of utility (p. 22).
5. Utility cannot provide a rational ground to persuade people to die for a good cause (pp. 30-31).
6. Either we must accept basic judgments of value as more than mere sentiments, as reason itself, or we must give up the attempt to find a core of rational value behind sentiments we have debunked (p 32).
7. Those who give up the attempt to find a rational basis for judgments of value (platitudes of practical reason) and seek a basis in instinct must also fail because such efforts either conceal a value judgment passed on instinct, or they merely record the felt intensity of a given instinct (p. 37).
8. Therefore, we must accept the basic judgments of value as reason itself, as axioms having absolute validity if we want to have values at all.
9. If we are willing to give up values, we can consistently deny the absolute validity of basic value judgments (p. 51).
10. If we give up the values necessary for virtue, stable sentiments, the only thing left to guide choices is impulse, "nature" (p. 67).
11. If the human race were to be unchangeably conditioned by a group of men with no other motive than impulse, man would be abolished, conquered by, and reduced to, nature (pp. 64, 72, 80).
12. Either we are rational spirits obliged to obey the tao (basic judgments of value) or we are mere nature, to be kneaded and cut for the pleasure of those driven by impulse (p. 73).
13. Surely we are not mere nature, to be kneaded and cut for the pleasure of those driven by impulse.
14. Therefore, we are rational spirits obliged to obey the tao.

LEWIS'S ARGUMENT IN MERE CHRISTIANITY



- 1898 Born Clive Staples Lewis November 29 in Belfast, Northern Ireland, to Albert James Lewis (1863-1929) and Flora Augusta Hamilton Lewis (1862-1908). His brother, Warren Hamilton Lewis had been born on June 16, 1895.
- 1905 The Lewis family moved to their new home, "Little Lea," on the outskirts of Belfast.
- 1908 Mother died of cancer on August 23, Albert Lewis' (her husband's) birthday; C. S. Lewis (nicknamed "Jack") and Warren sent to Wynyard School in England.
- 1910 Attends Campbell College Belfast for one term due to serious respiratory difficulties.
- 1911-1913 Studied at Cherbourg School, Malvern England, following Warren; remained remarkably poor in mathematics, unlike his mother, but evidenced an increasing affection for "Northernness" e.g. Wagner's music and Norse mythology. It was during this time that he abandoned his childhood Christian faith.
- 1914-1916 In April, Lewis met Arthur Greeves (1895-1966), of whom he said, in 1933, "After my brother, my oldest and most intimate friend." Extensive literary and philosophical studies (Latin, Greek, French, German, and Italian) under the private tuition of W. T. Kirkpatrick ("The Great Knock").
- 1916 Won scholarship to University College, Oxford.
- 1917 From April 26 until September, Lewis was a student at University College, Oxford. He enlisted in the British army during World War I and was billeted in Keble College, Oxford, for officer's training. His roommate was Edward Courtney Francis "Paddy" Moore (1898-1918). Jack was commissioned an officer in the 3rd Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry, on September 25 and reached the front line in the Somme Valley in France on his 19th birthday.
- 1918 On April 15 Lewis was wounded on Mount Berenchon during the Battle of Arras. He recuperated and was returned to duty in October, being assigned to Ludgerhall, Andover, England. He was discharged in December 1918. His former roommate and friend, Paddy Moore, was killed in battle and buried in the field just south of Peronne, France.
- 1919 The February issue of Reville contained "Death in Battle," Lewis' first publication in other than school magazines. From January, 1919 until June, 1924, he resumed his studies at University College, Oxford, where he

received a First in Honour Moderations (Greek and Latin Literature) in 1920, a First in Greats (Philosophy and Ancient History) in 1922, and a First in English in 1923.

- 1920 During the summer, Paddy Moore's mother, Mrs. Janie King Moore (1873-1951) and her daughter, Maureen, moved to Oxford, renting a house in Headington Quarry. Lewis lived with the Moores from June 1921 onward. In August 1930, they moved to "Hillsboro," Western Road, Headington. In October, 1930, Mrs. Moore, Jack, and Major Lewis purchased "The Kilns" jointly, with title to the property being taken solely in the name of Mrs. Moore with the two brothers holding rights of life tenancy. Major Lewis retired from the military and joined them at "The Kilns" in 1932.
- 1924 From October 1924 until May 1925, Lewis served as philosophy tutor at University College during E.F. Carritt's absence on study leave for the year in America.
- 1925 On May 20, Lewis was elected a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, where he served as tutor in English Language and Literature for 29 years until leaving for Magdalene College, Cambridge, in 1954.
- 1926 "Dymer," a book-length narrative poem, published under the pseudonym of Clive Hamilton.
- 1929 Lewis became a theist: "In the Trinity Term of 1929 I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed..." Albert Lewis died on September 24.
- 1931 Lewis became a Christian: One evening in September, Lewis had a long talk on Christianity with J.R.R. Tolkien (a devout Roman Catholic) and Hugo Dyson. That evening's discussion was important in bringing about the following day's event that Lewis recorded in *Surprised by Joy*: "When we [Warnie and Jack] set out [by motorcycle to the Whipsnade Zoo] I did not believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and when we reached the zoo I did."
- 1933 "The Pilgrim's Regress : An Allegorical Apology for Christianity, Reason, and Romanticism" was published. The fall term marked the beginning of Lewis' convening of a circle of friends dubbed "The Inklings." For the next 16 years, on through 1949, they continued to meet in Jack's rooms at Magdalen College on Thursday evenings and, just before lunch on Mondays or Fridays, in a back room at "The Eagle and Child," a pub known to locals as "The Bird and Baby." Members included J.R.R. Tolkien, Warnie, Hugo Dyson, Charles Williams, Dr. Robert Havard, Owen Barfield, Neville Coghill and others.
- 1935 At the suggestion of Prof. F.P. Wilson, Lewis agreed to write the volume on 16th Century English Literature for the Oxford History of English Literature

series. Published in 1954, it became a classic.

- 1936 "The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition" was published, for which he receives the Gollancz Memorial Prize for Literature in 1937.
- 1938 "Out of the Silent Planet," the first novel in the Space Trilogy.
- 1939 At the outbreak of World War II in September, Charles Williams moved from London to Oxford with the Oxford University Press to escape the threat of German bombardment. He was thereafter a regular member of "The Inklings."
- 1941 From May 2 until November 28, The Guardian published 31 "Screwtape Letters" in weekly installments. Lewis was paid 2 pounds sterling for each letter and gave the money to charity. In August, he gave four live radio talks over the BBC on Wednesday evenings from 7:45 to 8:00. An additional 15-minute session, answering questions received in the mail, was broadcast on September 6. These talks were known as "Right and Wrong."
- 1942 The first meeting of the "Socratic Club" was held in Oxford on January 26. In January and February, Lewis gave five live radio talks on Sunday evenings from 4:45 to 5:00, on the subject "What Christians Believe." On eight consecutive Sundays, from September 20 to November 8 at 2:50 to 3:05 p.m., Lewis gave a series of live radio talks known as "Christian Behavior."
- 1943 "Perelandra," the second novel in the Space Trilogy, was published. In February, at the University of Durham, Lewis delivered the Riddell Memorial Lectures (Fifteenth Series), a series of three lectures subsequently published as The Abolition of Man.
- 1944 On seven consecutive Tuesdays, from February 22 to April 4 at 10:15 to 10:30 p.m., Lewis gave the pre-recorded talks known as "Beyond Personality." Taken together, all of Lewis' BBC radio broadcast talks were eventually published under the title Mere Christianity. From November 10, 1944 to April 14, 1945, "The Great Divorce" was published in weekly installments in The Guardian.
- 1945 Charles Williams, one of Lewis' very closest of friends, died on May 15. "That Hideous Strength," the last novel in the Space Trilogy, was published.
- 1946 Passed over for Merton professorship of English Literature at Oxford, but was awarded honorary Doctor of Divinity by the University of St. Andrews.
- 1947 "Miracles: A Preliminary Study" was published

- 1950 "The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe," the first of the seven Chronicles of Narnia, was published.
- 1951 "Prince Caspian," the second of the seven Chronicles of Narnia, was published. Mrs. Moore died on January 12. Since the previous April, she had been confined to a nursing home in Oxford.
- 1952 "The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'," the third of the seven Chronicles of Narnia, was published. In September, he met Joy Davidman Gresham, seventeen years his junior (b. April 18, 1915 - d. July 13, 1960), for the first time.
- 1953 "The Silver Chair," the fourth of the seven Chronicles of Narnia, was published.
- 1954 "The Horse and His Boy," the fifth of the seven Chronicles of Narnia, was published. In June, Lewis accepted the Chair of Medieval and Renaissance Literature at Cambridge. He gave his Inaugural Lecture, "De Description Temporum," on his 56th birthday and gave his last tutorial at Oxford on December 3rd.
- 1955 "The Magician's Nephew," the sixth of the seven Chronicles of Narnia, was published, as was his biography "Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life."
- 1956 "The Last Battle," the seventh and final book in the Chronicles of Narnia, was published (he receives the Carnegie Medal in recognition of it), as was "Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold." On April 23, he entered into a civil marriage with Joy at the Oxford Registry Office for the purpose of conferring upon her the status of British citizenship in order to prevent her threatened deportation by British migration authorities. In December, a bedside marriage was performed in accordance with the rites of the Church of England in Wingfield Hospital. Joy's death was thought to be imminent because of bone cancer. Joy had converted to Christianity from Judaism in 1948 partly under the influence of Lewis's books and divorced in 1953 due to her husband's desertion.
- 1956 (23 April) Married Joy Davidman Gresham in secret civil ceremony when British Home Office denied continuance of her residency permit. Davidman had converted to Christianity from Judaism in 1948 partly under the influence of Lewis's books, met Lewis in 1952, divorced in 1953 due to her husband's desertion and later developed bone cancer.
- 1957 (21 March) Married Joy in church ceremony at her hospital bed.
- 1958 Throughout 1957, Joy had experienced an extraordinary recovery from her near terminal bout with cancer. In July of 1958, Jack and Joy went to

Ireland for a 10-day holiday. On August 19 and 20, he made tapes of ten talks on *The Four Loves* in London. Lewis was elected an Honorary Fellow of University College, Oxford. "Reflections on the Psalms" was published.

- 1960 Subsequent to learning of the return of Joy's cancer, Jack and Joy, together with Roger Lancelyn Green and his wife, Joy, went to Greece from April 3 to April 14, visiting Athens, Mycenae, Rhodes, Herakleon, and Knossos. There was a one-day stop in Pisa on the return. Joy died on July 13 at the age of 45, not long after their return from Greece. "Studies in Words" and "The Four Loves" were published.
- 1961 "A Grief Observed," an account of his suffering caused by his wife's death in 1960, published under the pseudonym of N. W. Clerk. "An Experiment in Criticism" was also published.
- 1962 "They Asked for a Paper: Papers and Addresses" was published.
- 1963 Lewis died at 5:30 p.m. at The Kilns, one week before his 65th birthday on Friday, November 22, after a variety of illnesses, including a heart attack and kidney problems. This same day, American president John F. Kennedy was assassinated and Aldous Huxley died. He had resigned his position at Cambridge during the summer and was then elected an Honorary Fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge. His grave is in the yard of Holy Trinity Church in Headington Quarry, Oxford.